

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 ZAGREB 00269 01 OF 02 311601Z

ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL ZAGREB

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4393

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 ZAGREB 269

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, YO

SUBJECT: TITO VISITS CROATIA

REF: BELGRADE 1524

1. SUMMARY. FROM MARCH 23 TO MARCH 27, PRESIDENT TITO PAID HIS FIRST VISIT IN MORE THAN A YEAR TO ZAGREB AND TRAVELLED TO OTHER NEARBY CROATIAN TOWNS INCLUDING HIS BIRTHPLACE KUMROVEC. THE HIGHLIGHTS OF TITO'S HEAVY PUBLIC SCHEDULE INCLUDED A CEREMONY TO MARK THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS ENTRY INTO THE ZAGREB PARTY COMMITTEE AND A SERIES OF FOUR LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE POLITICAL SCHOOL IN KUMROVEC. THE ACCENT DURING TITO'S VISIT TO CROATIA APPEARED TO BE ON THE CEREMONIAL AND PUBLIC SIDE. HIS PUBLIC MESSAGE TO THE CROATIAN LEADERSHIP WAS A CLEAR WARNING AGAINST THE DANGERS OF FACTIONALISM. THE VISIT ALSO UNDOUBTEDLY OFFERED OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS WITH CROATIAN LEADERS ON THE UPCOMING PARTY CONGRESS. HOWEVER, THERE WERE NO OUTWARD SIGNS OF IMPENDING LEADERSHIP CHANGES. TITO APPEARED ALERT, WELL-RESTED, AND FIT THROUGHOUT THE VISIT. END SUMMARY.

2. AFTER MORE THAN A YEAR'S ABSENCE, PRESIDENT TITO RETURNED TO ZAGREB. DURING THE FIVE-DAY VISIT WHICH INCLUDED SIDE TRIPS  
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PAGE 02 ZAGREB 00269 01 OF 02 311601Z

TO THE NEARBY CROATIAN CITIES OF VARAZDIN, CAKOVEC, AND KUMROVEC, TITO FOLLOWED A BUSY AND FULL SCHEDULE OF CEREMONIES, TRAVEL, SPEECHES, MEETINGS, AND LECTURES. TITO, ACCOMPANIED BY HIS WIFE JOVANKA AND RANKING CROATIAN MEMBERS OF THE PRESIDUM OF THE LEAGUE OF COMMUNISTS OF YUGOSLAVIA (LCY) JURE BILIC AND JOSIP VRHOVEC, ARRIVED AT ZAGREB'S WEST STATION ABOARD HIS PERSONAL TRAIN ON THE MORNING OF MARCH 23. ON

HAND AT THE STATION WERE THE TOP OFFICIALS OF THE LEAGUE OF COMMUNISTS OF CROATIA (LCC) AND THE CROATIAN REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT INCLUDING: MILKA PLANINC, LCC PRESIDENT; JAKOV BLAZEVIC, CROATIAN PRESIDENT; DUSAN DRAGOSAVAC, LCC EXECUTIVE SECRETARY; IVO PERSIN, PRESIDENT OF THE SABOR; JAKOV SIROTKOVIC; PRESIDENT OF THE CROATIAN EXECUTIVE COUNCIL; COLONEL GENERAL DUSAN CORKOVIC, COMMANDER OF THE ZAGREB ARMY REGION; AND ZLATKO UZELAC, CROATIAN SECRETARY FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS. TITO AND HIS PARTY PROCEEDED FROM THE STATION TO THE VILLA ZAGORJE, HIS OFFICIAL RESIDENCE IN ZAGREB, WHERE HE WAS MET BY VLADIMIR BAKARIC, CROATIAN MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL PRESIDENCY, IVO MARGAN, PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIALIST ALLIANCE OF CROATIA, AND MILUTIN BALTIC, PRESIDENT OF THE CROATIAN TRADE UNION COUNCIL. LATER THAT DAY, TITO RECEIVED A DELEGATION FROM THE YUGOSLAV ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND ARTS AT HIS RESIDENCE AND ATTENDED A LATE AFTERNOON CEREMONY AT THE EDUCATIONAL CENTER FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS IN ZAGREB. IN HIS BRIEF REMARKS AT THE SCHOOL, TITO STRESSED THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF THE WORK OF THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS ORGANS AND NOTED (WITHOUT BEING SPECIFIC) THAT YUGOSLAVIA HAS MANY EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL ENEMIES.

3. ON MARCH 24, TITO ATTENDED A CEREMONIAL SESSION OF THE ZAGREB SECTION OF THE LCC WHICH MARKED THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS ENTRY INTO THE LOCAL ZAGREB COMMITTEE OF THE YUGOSLAV COMMUNIST PARTY IN 1927. FOLLOWING THE MAIN ADDRESS BY DRAGUTIN PLASC, PRESIDENT OF THE ZAGREB SECTION OF THE LCC, TITO RECEIVED A MEMORIAL PLAQUE AND GAVE A BRIEF ADDRESS. SPEAKING WITHOUT A PREPARED TEXT, TITO LOOKED BACK TO HIS ENTRY INTO THE ZAGREB CITY COMMITTEE AND CALLED FOR THE PARTY TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 ZAGREB 00269 01 OF 02 311601Z

EXHIBIT THE SAME SPIRIT OF MILITANCY AND ALERTNESS TODAY IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST "THE ENEMIES OF OUR SOCIALIST COUNTRY." IN ADDITION TO HIGH RANKING CROATIAN PARTY OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE, EDVARD KARDELJ, SLOVENIAN MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL PRESIDENCY WAS PRESENT FOR THE CEREMONY.

4. EARLY ON THE MORNING OF MARCH 25, TITO ACCOMPANIED BY HIS WIFE, JOVANKA, MILKA PLANINC, AND JAKOV BLAZEVIC, LEFT ZAGREB FOR HIS BIRTH PLACE KUMROVEC WITH BRIEF STOPS AT VARAZDIN AND CAKOVEC. TITO ARRIVED IN KUMROVEC AT NOON AND LATER THAT AFTERNOON DELIVERED THE FIRST IN A SERIES OF LECTURES ON THE HISTORY OF THE PARTY DURING THE INTERWAR PERIOD TO THE POLITICAL SCHOOL FOR PARTY ACTIVISTS. IN THE FIRST LECTURE ENTITLED "FACTIONALISM IN THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE STRUGGLE FOR PARTY UNITY" TITO CRITICIZED THE EARLY PARTY LEADERSHIP FROM 1920 TO

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PAGE 01 ZAGREB 00269 02 OF 02 311629Z  
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 ZAGREB 269

1927 FOR ENGAGING IN FACTIONAL STRUGGLES AND IGNORING THE WORKING CLASS. TITO SPOKE FROM A PREPARED TEXT BUT FREQUENTLY DEPARTED FROM THE TEXT TO ADD EXPLANATION OR TO RECITE ANECDOTES. THE HOUR AND A HALF LECTURE WAS ATTENDED BY TOP CROATIAN PARTY LEADERS AND VIDOJE ZARKOVIC, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL PRESIDENCY.

5. ON THE FOURTH DAY TITO REMAINED IN KUMROVEC TO DELIVER THREE MORE LECTURES ON PARTY HISTORY. TWO MORNING LECTURES EXAMINED THE YUGOSLAV COMMUNIST PARTY'S DEALINGS WITH THE COMINTERN AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE PARTY LEADERSHIP FOLLOWING TITO'S RETURN TO THE COUNTRY IN 1938. THE AFTERNOON LECTURE DISCUSSED THE PREPARATIONS OF THE PARTY FOR THE "WAR OF NATIONAL LIBERATION AND THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION." STANE DOLANC, LCY EXECUTIVE SECRETARY WAS ALSO PRESENT ALONG WITH CROATIAN LEADERS IN KUMROVEC. IN THE EVENING, TITO RECEIVED STUDENT ACTIVISTS FROM THE SCHOOL TO DISCUSS THE SCHOOL'S WORK WITH THEM.

6. ON THE FINAL FULL DAY OF THE VISIT, MARCH 27, TITO VISITED THE NEARBY TOWN OF KLANJEC AND THE GALLERY OF SCULPTOR ANTUN AUGUSTINCIC. LATER, IN THE EVENING, TITO ATTENDED A DINNER IN KUMROVEC WITH PARTY AND GOVERNMENT LEADERS INCLUDING ZARKOVIC, BAKARIC, BLAZEVIC, PLANINC, BILIC, PERISIN, DRAGOSAVAC, MARGAN, AND JOSIP VRHOVEC (WHO IS ALSO PRESIDENT OF THE KUMROVEC LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 ZAGREB 00269 02 OF 02 311629Z

POLITICAL SCHOOL). ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, TITO AND MILKA PLANINC EXCHANGED TOASTS. IN HIS TOAST, TITO RETURNED TO THE

THEMES WHICH HAD APPEARED IN HIS LECTURES: THE DIFFICULT STRUGGLE OF THE PARTY IN THE EARLY YEARS AGAINST CLASS ENEMIES AND STALIN'S PURGES; THE DANGERS OF FACTIONALISM AT THE TOP LEVELS OF LEADERSHIP; AND THE SACRIFICES WHICH ENABLED A SMALL PARTY TO TRANSFORM ITSELF INTO A LIBERATION MOVEMENT. TITO NOTED, "IF THERE HAD BEEN NO PARTY, THERE WOULD BE NO YUGOSLAVIA." THE PARTY, TITO SAID, IS THE "CEMENT WHICH FIRMLY HOLDS TOGETHER OUR SOCIALIST YUGOSLAV COMMUNITY." TITO CONCLUDED HIS TOAST WITH A STRONG WARNING ABOUT THE DANGERS OF "IMPERIALISM" "IMPERIALISM DOES NOT REST," HE SAID. "WHEN PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENTS APPEAR IN AFRICA, ASIA AND ELSEWHERE, IMPERIALISM WITH ALL ITS MIGHT TRIES TO BRING THEM DOWN."

7. COMMENT: THE ACCENT DURING TITO'S VISIT TO CROATIA SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN ON CEREMONY AND PUBLIC APPEARANCE. TITO HAD A FULL SCHEDULE OF TRAVEL, ADDRESSES, AND LECTURES, AND HE SPENT MOST OF HIS TIME IN FULL PUBLIC VIEW. HIS PUBLIC MESSAGE TO THE ASSEMBLED CROATIAN LEADERSHIP WAS CLEAR. DRAWING ON THE LESSONS OF THE INTERWAR PERIOD, TITO WARNED OF EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL ENEMIES AND, MOST OF ALL, OF THE DANGERS OF FACTIONALISM. HE STRESSED THAT PARTY UNITY IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE SURVIVAL OF A UNIFIED SOCIALIST YUGOSLAVIA.

8. ANY PRIVATE MESSAGE THAT TITO MAY HAVE HAD FOR THE CROATIAN LEADERSHIP WILL ONLY BECOME KNOWN AS IT FILTERS DOWN IN SPEECHES AND PRIVATE REMARKS IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS. CERTAINLY, THE LCC CONGRESS, SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 1978, AND THE LCY CONGRESS WHICH WILL FOLLOW WERE LIKELY TOPICS OF DISCUSSION. ONE CAN SPECULATE THAT HE UNDERLINED THE NEED TO AVOID FACTIONALISM AND INTRA-PARTY RIVALRY AT A TIME WHEN LEADERSHIP CHANGES MAY BE APPROACHING.

9. THE PUBLIC APPEARANCES OF THE VARIOUS CROATIAN LEADERS SEEMED TO REFLECT THIS EMPHASIS ON UNITY. ALL OF THE MAJOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 ZAGREB 00269 02 OF 02 311629Z

CROATIAN FIGURES APPEARED AND HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE SEEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED IN TITO'S COMPANY. THERE WAS NO PUBLIC SIGN OF ANY BAKARIC-TITO DISAGREEMENT AS HAD BEEN SUGGESTED EARLIER BY THE FAILURE OF TITO TO SEND GREETING ON BAKARIC'S BIRTHDAY (REFTEL). BECAUSE OF THE EMPHASIS ON THE "PARTY" ASPECTS OF THE VISIT, I.E., THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY AND THE LECTURES, CROATIAN PARTY CHIEF PLANINC NATURALLY HAD THE MOST PROMINENT ROLE.

10. AS FOR TITO HIMSELF, HE APPEARED TO HAVE HANDLED THE HEAVY SCHEDULE WITHOUT DIFFICULTY. HE SEEMED WELL RESTED, FIT, AND ALERT. IN THE TELEVISION EXCERPTS OF HIS ADDRESSES AND LECTURES, HE SPOKE CLEARLY AND WAS MOST EFFECTIVE WHEN SPEAKING WITHOUT NOTES OR WHEN DEPARTING FROM HIS PREPARED TEXT. ONE

OF THE MORE STRIKING IMAGES OF THE VISIT WAS THE PUBLISHED  
PICTURE OF TITO GREETING ONE OF HIS CHILDHOOD FRIENDS, PRESUMABLY  
OF THE SAME AGE. TITO, LOOKING STRAIGHT AND ROBUST, BORE ALMOST  
NO RESEMBLANCE TO HIS BALDING, WRINKLED, BENT CONTEMPORARY.  
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